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SAVA 73-45

4 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

1. Attached is a note prepared by my colleagues which you may find of interest. I knew the enemy was close enough to Phnom Penh to have considerable harassment potential but did not realize the full extent of the potential threat to the capital that currently exists.

2. OCI is preparing a PIP on the Cambodian situation, the draft of which I have discussed with [redacted] and Lehman. I think it will run up the right kind of warning. In Cambodia, there are two distinct but obviously related current problems:

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(a) For a variety of reasons -- disaffection with Lon Non, a concern on the part of key military commanders that they may be next on his hatchet list, a potential gasoline crisis, perceived enemy threat, etc. -- the atmosphere in the capital is becoming increasingly volatile. Nothing of consequence may happen, but you have a situation in which a small act by someone, misinterpreted by someone else (or even the rumor of an action which has in fact not occurred) could have a catalytic effect in precipitating a crisis, even one which nobody intended or wanted to initiate.

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(b) The preoccupation of the Cambodian military leadership with internal political problems has reduced the army's capacity for action against the enemy to a point where a very small amount of insurgent military pressure applied at the right (or wrong) place or time could collapse our allies' house of cards.

[]
George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Attachment

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Copy No. 1 - DCI

Copy No. 2 - VAS/RAC

Copy No. 3 - GAC Chrono ✓

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